

# Temple Carrig School

## Faith Education and Practice Policy 2019

Temple Carrig School is, first and foremost, a Christian school in the tradition of the Church of Ireland. The Statement of Ethos<sup>i</sup> states that the School “seeks to promote the moral and personal values inherent in this tradition and faith”, and students and staff are expected to aspire to the highest Christian ideals and standards as they go about their teaching and learning in the School<sup>ii</sup>.

The Admissions Policy further states that “Religious Education and Assemblies are an integral part of the ethos and educational structure of the school.”<sup>iii</sup> As such, it is mandatory that students attending Temple Carrig Secondary School participate in these areas of the school curriculum.

While the education offered in Temple Carrig School will naturally be shaped and flavoured by the School’s Church of Ireland heritage and patronage, it will, in accordance with this tradition, also be designed to be inclusive and accessible to members of all Christian denominations and to those with no Christian faith at all. Students will be expected to participate in all Temple Carrig School activities, although it is expected and understood that the meaningfulness of certain occasions will be greater for some than for others.

### **Obligatory Religious Instruction in Temple Carrig School**

#### *Religious Education Classes*

The School follows the standard curriculum for Religious Education, as designed by the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA). This involves compulsory R.E. classes for all students up to Transition Year. Students may then choose to take R.E. as an exam subject for the Leaving Cert, or they can drop the subject at this stage. In Third Year, students undertake the *Youth Alpha* course and in Transition Year they study the follow-up *Nua* course. Students in Temple Carrig School do NOT sit a Junior Cert exam in Religious Education.

#### *Assemblies*

All students attend School Assemblies during the course of the week. As well as school notices for that day, these Assemblies include a brief (usually about three minutes) reflection. This is usually led by a member of the Chaplaincy team, will often have a spiritual dimension or a biblical origination and may finish with a prayer. However, there is no denominational aspect to it. There is an explicit and frequently-voiced appreciation that many of the students present have no Christian faith and themes are chosen for their relevance to the lives of all Irish teenagers rather than just those of a particular religious background.

These are the only obligatory aspects of religious practices and education in the School.

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<sup>i</sup> See also the *Temple Carrig School Statement of Ethos*.

<sup>ii</sup> See also the *Temple Carrig School Code of Conduct*.

<sup>iii</sup> See also the *Temple Carrig School Admissions Policy*.

## **Religious Services**

All students and their families are invited to participate in a Service of Dedication at the start of the school year. This service comprises readings, hymns, prayers, an address by the Principal and other items, such as the Conferral of Prefects.

All students and their families are invited to participate in the Carol Service on the last night before the Christmas Holidays. This service comprises readings, reflections and carols.

All students are invited to participate in a Thanksgiving Service at the end of the school year. This service comprises readings, hymns, prayers, an address by a guest speaker and other items, such as a Valedictory ceremony for students who are leaving the School.

Occasionally, services may be held in the School to mark specific events or milestones, including services of Holy Communion. Attendance at all such events is entirely voluntary and open to all who wish to attend.

## **Other Christian Practices in Temple Carrig School**

Other Christian observances and faith development will be open and offered to all, but non-compulsory. Such activities may include (but is not restricted to):

- Lenten and Easter observances
- A Parents' Prayer Group
- Participation in activities of a *Christian Union* club (which may include overnight events)
- Participation in inter-school and extra-curricular Christian events
- The opportunity to explore one's own faith with the support of members of staff or the vibrant Chaplaincy Team.

## **Employment in Temple Carrig School**

Temple Carrig School is an equal opportunities employer and does not discriminate in terms of religious background when appointing members of staff.

Approved by the Board of Management: 5<sup>th</sup> March 2019